

PONTIFICIA UNIVERSITAS ANTONIANUM
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Dissertatio ad Doctoratum

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***THE UNIVOCITY OF BEING IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF MARTIN
HEIDEGGER: JOHN DUNS SCOTUS' INFLUENCE***

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ABBREVIATIONS

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| Praedict. | Quaestiones super praedicamento Aristotelis |
| Elench. | Quaestiones super librum elenchorum Aristotelis |
| Ord. | Ordinatio |
| Lect. | Lectura |
| Quaest. De an. | Quaestiones super secundum et tertium De anima |
| In Porph. | Quaestiones in librum Porphyrii Isagoge |
| Quaest. in Met. | Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis |
| Rep. | Reportatio |
| d. | Distinction |
| p. | Pars |
| q. | Question |
| n. | Paragraph number |

INTRODUCTION

This thesis “*The Univocity of Being in the Philosophy of Martin Heidegger: John Duns Scotus’ Influence*” is an effort to consider that being (*das Sein*) in Heidegger’s (1889–1976) philosophy is univocal in Duns Scotus’ theory. The scope of this thesis is to show how the univocity of being of Duns Scotus influences Heidegger. In other words, there is the univocity of being in Heidegger’s question of being (*die Seinsfrage*). As we have known the question of the meaning of being is a central question in Heidegger’s philosophy and it guides all his thinking. He said frankly that philosophy before him has forgotten this central question, even though the fundamental and basic question of philosophy is the question of being¹.

As we analyze the history of philosophy, John Duns Scotus (1265/1266 – 1308) was a philosopher and theologian who explained exhaustively the univocity of being. This univocity of the concept of being, *ens in quantum ens*, is one of the metaphysical theories of Duns Scotus. Considering that being is the object of intellect and metaphysics, he indicates that there is the univocity of the concept of being. In other words, there is the unity of the concept of being. As Philip Tonner indicates “Minimally, the univocity of being entails that there is a fundamental concept or *sense of* being under which falls anything whatsoever that exist”². We

¹ «Haben wir heute eine Antwort auf die Frage nach dem, was wir mit dem Wort »seiend« eigentlich meinen? Keineswegs. Und so gilt es denn, *die Frage nach dem Sinn von Sein* erneut zu stellen. Sind wir denn heute auch nur in der Verlegenheit, den Ausdruck »Sein« nicht zu verstehen? Keineswegs. Und so gilt es denn vordem, allererst wieder ein Verständnis für den Sinn dieser Frage zu wecken. Die konkrete Ausarbeitung der Frage nach dem Sinn von »Sein« ist die Absicht der folgenden Abhandlung». M. HEIDEGGER, *Sein und Zeit*, Gesamtausgabe Band 2, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 1977, p. 1. I also use English translation. M. HEIDEGGER, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 1962, p. 19.

² P. TONNER, *Heidegger, Metaphysics and the Univocity of Being*, Continuum, London, 2010, p. 2.

will see that Duns Scotus' theory on the univocity of being is part of his discussion with Thomas Aquinas, an Aristotelian-scholastic in the Middle Ages and how this concept of univocity of being influences the concept of being in Heidegger.

Our main purpose in this thesis is to show and confirm that an interpretation of being (*das Sein*) in the philosophy of Heidegger is univocal as Duns Scotus' theory. Our study is an attempt to show that the univocity of being in Heidegger is influenced by Duns Scotus' metaphysics of being, that is, the univocity of being. This objective leads us to evaluate what the univocal of being is and its relationship with analogy in which Duns Scotus has given a satisfied explanation. We will see and shows that the discussion about analogy and univocity of being happened in the Middle Ages. But actually the problem of univocity of being had already been introduced by Aristotle in his works. For this reason, we need to consult the philosophical thinkers before Heidegger who have discussed this theory especially Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus.

The main purpose of this thesis will be guided by a question: how can one see the relationship between Duns Scotus and Heidegger about the concept of the univocity of being? In other words, we could say how to understand the relationship between 'the medieval philosophy' and 'the contemporary philosophy' of the univocity of being. Thomas Sheehan is one of the few philosophers who have interpreted Heidegger's philosophy of being in terms of the *analogia entis*. But analogy of being, employing Duns Scotus' point of view, is impossible without a prior *univocatio entis*. The Subtle Doctor determines that the analogy of being presupposes the univocity of being. It is the same case in our interpretation of Heidegger's philosophy. The *analogia entis* in Heidegger presupposes the univocity of being. McGrath affirms this in the preface of his book *The Early Heidegger &*

Medieval Philosophy that Aquinas' *analogia entis* is annulled by Heidegger's identification of temporality and being³.

There are two motives, which stimulate us to elaborate the univocity of being. First of all after finishing our licentiate thesis of *Il posto dell'uomo nel mondo secondo Martin Heidegger* (The place of the human being in the world according to Martin Heidegger), we found that Heidegger was influenced by Medieval thought particularly that of Duns Scotus. Heidegger was, as McGrath said, constantly concerned with Duns Scotus and the Middle Ages. Heidegger has at least elaborated Duns Scotus' univocity of being, *Haecceitas* and formal distinction in his philosophy.

Our supposition is further confirmed by finding that Gilles Deleuze, Franco Volpi, McGrath and Philip Tonner have opened this research. This is the second reason for our interest. Indeed there are still not many philosophers, in my consideration, who treat this subject intensively. Many have worked on the philosophy of Heidegger but the concept of univocity of being has not played an important role in Heidegger's philosophy. The word univocity itself rarely features in the index of translations of Heidegger's texts. But in *Sein und Zeit* one can see the univocity of being. McGrath notes clearly:

Heidegger's debt to Scotus manifests itself on the opening page of *Sein und Zeit*. Heidegger asks about the *meaning* of being, that is, to what essence (*logos*) does the word "being" refer (*SZ* 2/1). He assumes a single meaning of being, a *univocatio entis*, which determines and makes possible all thinking and discourse⁴.

Deleuze, Volpi, McGrath and Tonner consider the works of Heidegger from the perspective of the univocity of being. They motivate us to analyze some works

³ Cf. J. MCGRATH, *The Early Heidegger and Medieval Philosophy, Phenomenology for the Godforsaken*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2006, p. X.

⁴ MCGRATH, *The Early Heidegger and Medieval Philosophy, Phenomenology for the Godforsaken*, 88.

of Heidegger from the point of view of the univocity of being. For that reason we try to focus ourselves on the concept of being, which is univocal in the philosophy of Duns Scotus and Heidegger. Both hold the view that in all things or beings (*das Seiende*) that exist, there is a fundamental concept of being. Such a view plays a distinctive and crucial role in Duns Scotus' and Heidegger's philosophy. At this point, it is true that there is a problem with historiography. However, Duns Scotus and Heidegger were sure that analogy is impossible without a prior univocity.

There are two books, in our consideration, which elaborate distinctly the univocity of being in Heidegger's philosophy. First, the univocity of being is examined by Volpi in his book *Heidegger e Brentano: l'Aristotelismo e il problema dell'univocità dell'essere nella formazione filosofica del giovane Martin Heidegger*⁵. In this book, Volpi elaborates the univocity of being in Heidegger's early writing (*Frühe Schriften*). He considers Heidegger's works from 1912 (*Das Realitätsproblem in der modernen Philosophie*) until 1916 (*Die Kategorien- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus*). According to him, Brentano has influenced Heidegger to have the concept of univocity of being and this influence is found in Heidegger's early writing (*Frühe Schriften*). In our opinion, two points are not accentuated here: it does not explain the univocity of being in Heidegger's works after 1916 especially in Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* and Volpi does not indicate Duns Scotus as the Philosopher who explains clearly the univocity of being.

Second, the concept of univocity of being in Heidegger's philosophy is analyzed by Tonner in his book *Heidegger, Metaphysics and the Univocity of Being*. His interpretation of the univocity of being in Heidegger's philosophy has been affirmed by Deleuze's pronouncement in his *Difference and Repetition* that Heidegger follows Scotus and gives 'renewed splendor' to the univocity of being. "If it is true that some commentators have found Thomist echos in Husserl,

⁵ F. VOLPI, *Heidegger e Brentano: L'Aristotelismo e il problema dell'univocità dell'essere nella formazione filosofica del giovane Martin Heidegger*, Casa Editrice Dott. Antonio Milani, Padova, 1976.

Heidegger, by contrast, follows Duns Scotus and gives renewed splendour to the univocity of being”⁶. The subject of Tonner’s book is to develop an interpretation of Heidegger’s philosophy in terms of the univocity of being. Achieving this, according to him, is impossible without reference to Aristotelian-scholastic substance ontology in general, and to the philosophy of Duns Scotus in particular. The Subtle Doctor raised philosophical univocity to its historical apotheosis. Tonner affirms, as Deleuze indicated, that Heidegger ‘follows Scotus’.

It is my [Tonner’s] view that achieving the end of understanding Heidegger with reference to univocity is impossible without reference to the philosophy of John Duns Scotus, who raised philosophical univocity to its highest point in the history of Western philosophy⁷.

In our consideration, there are two points that are not emphasized by Tonner. First, Tonner does not give an elaboration of metaphysics especially about analogy and univocity of being in the Middle Ages. He does not explain Aquinas’ and Duns Scotus’ explanations of them. Second, he does not explain sufficiently the univocity of being and does not show that time is also univocal in Duns Scotus’ thought. Tonner indicates that the univocity of being in Heidegger’s philosophy can be interpreted in *Dasein*’s temporality but Tonner does not describe the concept of time in Duns Scotus, which can also be interpreted as univocal. Moreover, Tonner also considers Duns Scotus’ philosophy as part of ontotheology in Heidegger’s sense.

However we agree with Volpi and Tonner that there is univocity of being in Heidegger’s thought. Our research then is in their direction, that is, to interpret the univocity of being in Heidegger’s philosophy. To us, the concept of univocity of being unites the philosophy of Duns Scotus and Heidegger. It is true that, as said by Tonner, before starting this work we have to pose two questions for ourselves. First,

⁶ G. DELEUZE, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. P. Patton, Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 66.

⁷ TONNER, *Heidegger, Metaphysics and the Univocity of Being*, 180.

is the doctrine of the univocity of being explicitly significant for Heidegger? The answer is that univocity, while not explicitly thematized in his work, remains an implicit commitment and as such can serve as an interpretive tool for characterizing his philosophy. Howsoever Heidegger characterizes his philosophy of being explicitly; his concept of being is, implicitly, univocal. Second, even if being is univocal for Heidegger; does his concept of univocal being have anything in common with Duns Scotus' view of being? The answer to the second question is that while Duns Scotus' and Heidegger's concept of the univocity of being differ from each other, they do nonetheless have something in common. That is, Duns Scotus and Heidegger share a commitment to being having one prevailing sense. This is enough to characterize both philosophies of being in terms of univocity⁸.

The purpose of this study is to prove and confirm that being in the philosophy of Heidegger is univocal. Our research, therefore, is using an analytic and a comparative method of Duns Scotus' and Heidegger's works to make justification that being in Heidegger's philosophy is univocal. It means that we will analyze and point out the concept of univocal of being in Duns Scotus' and Heidegger's works. For that reason we will select some of their works for our thesis. Before analyzing and elaborating the univocity of being in Heidegger's texts, we will present and explore how the meaning of univocity of being is in Duns Scotus' works.

In such a work it becomes necessary to read the works of Duns Scotus and Heidegger, which speak primarily about the concept of univocity of being. Only after that will we read the works of commentators or studies of them. The aim of this process is to get the genuine teaching and a comprehensive understanding about the concept from the point of view of Duns Scotus and Heidegger. The method of this thesis, therefore, is an analytical study of their texts.

⁸ Cf. TONNER, *Heidegger, Metaphysics and the Univocity of Being*, 4.

After making an analytical study of Duns Scotus' and Heidegger's works, we will make a comparison of them. This comparative method aims to show that being in Heidegger's philosophy has the univocal concept of being as Duns Scotus' theory. We will show that the univocity of being in the Subtle Doctor is found in the meaning of being itself and in Heidegger the univocity of being can be interpreted in *Dasein's* primordial temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*). In other words, the univocity of being in Heidegger's philosophy will be found in his concept of time. We will compare certain concepts of Duns Scotus such as *distinctio formale*, *haecceitas* and contingency with Heidegger's philosophy on formal indication, *Dasein* and Facticity, and *Ereignis*. Both philosophers also consider the concept of time and the concept of nothing.

In our consideration, there are three contributions of this thesis. They indicate that there is the univocity of being in Heidegger's philosophy, which is influenced by Duns Scotus. First, there is univocal being and time in both Duns Scotus' and Heidegger's thought. Duns Scotus holds that being by its nature is univocal and Heidegger's univocity of being can be found in *Dasein's* temporality. A new thing here is that the time of Duns Scotus can also be interpreted univocally. This will affirm the similarity of the univocity of being between Duns Scotus and Heidegger. Second, before explaining the univocity of being in Duns Scotus' and Heidegger's philosophy, we try to elaborate on the terms equivocity, analogy and univocity of being in the philosophy of Aristotle and Aquinas. The aim of this explanation is to get a more comprehensive understanding of the context and the meaning of the univocity of being in Duns Scotus and Heidegger. We need the explanation of these three terms and especially of analogy in Aristotle and Aquinas to comprehend the univocity of being in Duns Scotus and Heidegger. It is important to affirm that analogy presupposes the univocity of being. Therefore the explanation of analogy of being will help us to understand the meaning of univocity of being in Duns Scotus and Heidegger. Third, another novelty of this thesis is that the comparison of some themes of Duns Scotus and Heidegger indicates clearly the similarity and dissimilarity between them. In other words, by comparing certain

concepts of Duns Scotus and Heidegger, a close relationship can be seen between Duns Scotus' and Heidegger's philosophy.

To achieve our objective, this thesis will be divided in two parts. In the first part, we will concentrate on the discussion of the meaning of being as an object of metaphysics, the meaning of equivocity, analogy and univocity of being from Aquinas and Duns Scotus. This part is important in order to see the context, meaning and discussion about analogy and univocity in the Middle Ages. But before making an elaboration of these two concepts in Aquinas and Duns Scotus, we will point out how Aristotle explains the meaning of these concepts in his works. The second part will focus on the univocity of being in Heidegger's philosophy. It deals with the interpretation of the univocity of being in the early and later philosophy of Heidegger. But before exploring the univocity of being, we will show the interpretation of the analogy of being in Heidegger's philosophy.

The first part has three chapters. In the first chapter, we will elaborate on how Aristotle holds being as the object of metaphysics and his explanation of the meaning of synonymy (univocity), homonymy (equivocity-analogy), and paronymy. Aristotle is a major exponent who explains them. Aristotle also shows that there is a science, metaphysics, which investigates being *qua* being. For him, being is said in many senses. In this sense, the Stagirite introduces a problem of the unity of the concept of being. For him, being has no univocal meaning. Being is analogous. This analogy of being will be called analogy of proportionality. In Heidegger's perspective, we see four objections to Aristotle's analogy of being.

In the second chapter, we will elaborate an analogy of being in Aquinas' philosophy. Aquinas developed the analogy of being of Aristotle in the Middle Ages. He agrees with Aristotle about the meaning of univocity, equivocity, and analogy. The same with the Stagirite, Aquinas understands that being *qua* being, *esse commune* as the object of metaphysics. But the Angelic Doctor introduces and gives a new meaning to being when he designates that God is pure *actus* or *Ipsum*

esse subsistens. In explaining the predications or names of God, Aquinas applies the analogy of being. He designates that there are two kinds of analogy, namely, analogy of attribution (*secundum prius et posterius*) and analogy of proportionality. For the Angelic Doctor the relationship between creatures and God can only be understood with the analogy of being. We will consider some objections of Aquinas' analogy from Heidegger's perspective.

In the third chapter, we will concentrate on the univocity of concept of being in Duns Scotus' philosophy. We will elaborate the influence of the Augustinian and Aristotle-Thomistic Schools on Duns Scotus' philosophy. Like Aquinas, Duns Scotus also explains the meaning of univocity, equivocity, and analogy.

There are some important and new points in Duns Scotus' philosophy when compared with Aquinas' philosophy. The Subtle Doctor affirms that being is univocal. The Subtle Doctor puts forth four arguments for this univocity of being. Concerning the object of intellect and metaphysics, the Subtle Doctor explains further that there is only one object of intellect and metaphysics, which is, being. However he also acknowledges that in our daily life we live in a particular context, in virtue of the state in which the human intellect finds itself or *pro statu isto* the object of intellect is the quiddity of sensible things (*quidditas rei materialis*). But it does not mean that we have two adequate and proper objects for intellect. The proper, first, natural or adequate object of intellect then is being, just this one.

Duns Scotus understands and agrees that being is the object of metaphysics. He claims that the concept of being is univocal. For him the univocity of the concept of being provides the three principal points: it provides intellect with a proper adequate object; it supplies an appropriate unity to metaphysics; and it guarantees and saves the positive natural knowledge of God. Naming being as the object of metaphysics also indicates that the Subtle Doctor refuses substance, God and mobile being as the objects of metaphysics.

Duns Scotus notes that only the univocity of the concept of being can provide and guarantee us to arrive at the knowledge of God and to speak intelligibly of Him. In the Subtle Doctor's view we can have the knowledge of God or we can know the names and properties of God only if we use univocity of the concept of being as the basic or the foundation. Analogy presupposes the univocity of the concept of being.

In the second part, we will explain the univocity of being in Heidegger's philosophy. As Duns Scotus says that he does not refuse analogy but analogy presupposes the univocity of the concept of being, we will show first an interpretation of analogy of being and then will elaborate the univocity of being in Heidegger's philosophy.

The second part will be divided in three chapters, namely, from chapter four until chapter six. The fourth chapter will focus on an interpretation of analogy of being in Heidegger's philosophy. We will show the close relationship between Heidegger and medieval philosophy and theology. This relationship will show that Heidegger holds the discussion about analogy and univocity of being. After that, with the help of the interpretation of Sheehan and Tonner, we will point out that the analogy of being in Heidegger's philosophy can be seen in his explanation of being (*das Sein*), *Dasein* and *Ereignis*.

The univocity of being in Heidegger's philosophy will be elaborated in the following two chapters. The fifth chapter deals with an effort to point out the presence of the univocity of being in the early philosophy of Heidegger from 1912 to 1927. We will focus on his two works, namely, *Habilitationschrift: Die Kategorien- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus* and his *magnum opus*, *Sein und Zeit*. In the latter, we will find that the basis of a univocal concept of being in terms of time. The univocity of being is rooted in *Dasein*'s temporality. The univocity of being can be understood by indicating that *Dasein*'s temporality has characteristics, namely, ecstatic, future, finite, source of the within-time-ness (*Innerzeitigkeit*) and

the transcendental horizon for the question of being. We will show that these characteristics prove that *Dasein*'s time or temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) is a univocal concept. We will also point out that the concept of time of Duns Scotus has a univocal concept.

In the *Habilitationsschrift*, we will consider four indications of the univocity of being. They are Heidegger's reason to choose Duns Scotus, the structure of Heidegger's *Habilitationsschrift*, the method of his *Habilitationsschrift*, and Heidegger's acknowledgement that logical realm is univocal. From these four indications, we will find that the univocity of being is overt considering that being is being in-itself with objectivity and transcendence (*transcendens*), being for consciousness with intentionality (*Intentionalität*), and being as "a moment of clarity" (*Klarheitsmoment*). This meaning of being in Heidegger indicates the univocity of being (*univocatio entis*).

In this chapter, we will show and compare some themes of Duns Scotus with Heidegger. They include being, *distinctio formalis* and formal indication, *Haecceitas* and *Dasein*-facticity, temporality of *Dasein* (*Zeitlichkeit*) and the time of Duns Scotus. Concerning the comparison between temporality of *Dasein* (*Zeitlichkeit*) of Heidegger and the time of Duns Scotus, we will demonstrate that they have a univocal concept. This comparison makes evident that there is a close relationship between them.

In the sixth chapter, we will concentrate on the univocity of being in the later philosophy of Heidegger. Here we will consider two themes, namely, his critique of metaphysics as ontotheology and his thinking about the event of appropriation, *Ereignis*. Heidegger tries to overcome this type of metaphysics as ontotheology because it focuses on the highest being (God) and beingness of beings. It forgets being itself and neglects the ontological difference, the distinction between being (*das Sein*) and beings (*das Seiende*). We will show that Heidegger's critique of metaphysics as ontotheology demonstrates his critique of the analogy of being

because analogy belongs to metaphysics. It will be indicated that this critique will be motivated by Heidegger's effort to defend the temporality of *Dasein*. Considering *Dasein*'s temporality has the univocal concept of being, therefore overcoming metaphysics indicates that there is univocity of being.

Before concluding this thesis with a general conclusion, we will point out that the univocity of being appears distinctly in Heidegger's concept of *Ereignis*. Heidegger points out that *Ereignis* indicates *Beyng essentially occurs as the event*. *Ereignis* is 'It' that gives 'being' and 'time'. *Ereignis* is the relationship between *beyng* and *Da-sein*. It means that *Ereignis* as the event of appropriation concerns the *beyng*, which opens itself and *Da-sein* is called to respond or catch up the manifestation of *beyng* itself as occurrence (*Ereignis*). This indicates clearly that the openness of *beyng* needs *Da-sein* and the truth of *beyng* happens or occurs as the event only in the temporality of *Dasein*. *Dasein* belongs to *Ereignis* and *Ereignis* also occurs only in temporality of *Dasein*. Because the temporality of *Dasein* is univocal, *Ereignis* is also univocal. In the temporality of *Dasein*, *Ereignis* is univocal.

In the final part, we will present a general conclusion. We will try to present a global synthesis of the six chapters. In this section, we will note briefly Heidegger's charge that the philosophy before him has forgotten the question of being. We will point out and argue that the charge of 'oblivion of being' of Heidegger to the history of philosophy does not touch the metaphysics of Duns Scotus. It is because Duns Scotus discussed the being as such (*das Sein*) in his theory of the univocity of being (*ens in quantum ens*) and his theory of disjunctive transcendentals of finite or infinite.

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